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**From:** Villa, Catherine [Villa.Catherine@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 7:02:06 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** RE: Statement on Yesterday's Events

Mr. Wheeler,  
Thank you for this statement and your service to this country and the EPA.

In appreciation,

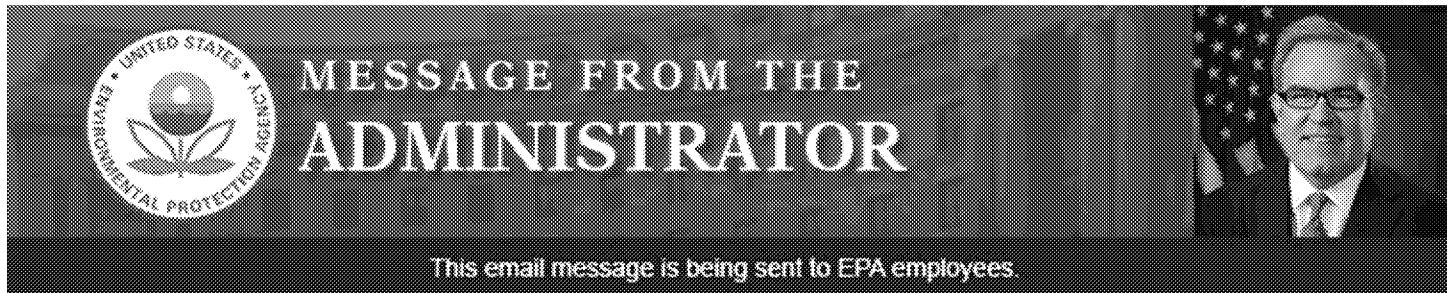
***Catherine Villa***

Tribal Coordinator  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
Alaska Operations Office  
222 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. #19  
Anchorage, AK 99513  
907-271-1270 or cell: 907-250-3550

*Don't wait, communicate!*

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**From:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 7:41 AM  
**To:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Statement on Yesterday's Events



Dear Colleagues,

As an American and as a 14 year veteran Senate staffer, I was completely disgusted by yesterday's events. There is no place for violence in settling political disputes. During my entire career I have upheld the rule of law and the Constitution of the United States. I take my oath of office, my obligation to the Agency and to the American People very seriously.

In my first speech to you, the Agency employees, I vowed to leave the Agency stronger than I found it. To date, we have provided the Biden transition team with hundreds of documents and over fifty briefings. My intention is to continue to honor the mission of the Agency, to protect public health and the environment, until January 20th in order to provide as smooth a transition for the Agency as possible.

Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator

Message

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**From:** Woods, Andrea [Woods.Andrea@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 7:43:01 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]; Meadowcroft, Micah [Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Andrea Woods Resignation Letter  
**Attachments:** Andrea Woods Resignation Letter.docx

Hi All,

My resignation letter is attached here.

Thank you!

Andrea

**Andrea Woods**  
Deputy Press Secretary  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Public Affairs  
202-564-2010

Message

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**From:** Davis, Patrick [davis.patrick@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 8:07:01 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Meadowcroft, Micah [Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov]; Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Patrick Davis letter of resignation  
**Attachments:** Patrick Davis letter of resignation.docx

Mr. Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

This letter serves as my official notice that I am resigning from the Environmental Protection Agency as Senior Advisor to the Regional Administrator for Public Engagement, Region 8, effective at 12 Noon EST on January 20, 2021. I was asked to resign due to a change in administration.

My forwarding email address is Ex. 6 and my mailing address can be found on the back of my resignation SF-52.

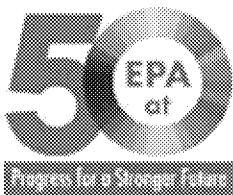
It has been a distinct honor to serve with you in the Trump administration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Davis  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Senior Advisor to the Regional Administrator for Public Engagement  
1595 Wynkoop Street  
Denver, CO 80202  
303-312-6855 (direct)  
720-607-9055 (cell)  
Twitter: [@EPARegion8](#)  
Facebook: [U.S. EPA Region 8](#)  
Webpage: [EPA Region 8 \(Mountains and Plains\)](#)

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Report an environmental violation: <https://echo.epa.gov/report-environmental-violations>



Mr. Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

This letter serves as my official notice that I am resigning from the Environmental Protection Agency as Senior Advisor to the Regional Administrator for Public Engagement, Region 8, effective at 12 Noon EST on January 20, 2021. I was asked to resign due to a change in administration.

My forwarding email address is Ex. 6 and my mailing address can be found on the back of my resignation SF-52.

It has been a distinct honor to serve with you in the Trump administration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Davis  
Senior Advisor to the Regional Administrator for Public Engagement  
Region 8

Message

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**From:** Fitzmorris, Amanda [fitzmorris.amanda@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 7:53:06 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Meadowcroft, Micah [Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov]; Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Resignation Letter Effective January 20, 2021 - Fitzmorris, Amanda  
**Attachments:** Resignation Letter - Fitzmorris, Amanda.pdf

Administrator Wheeler,

The enclosed memo tenders my resignation effective January 20, 2021.

Sincerely,

**Amanda Fitzmorris**  
*Special Advisor*  
Office of Research and Development  
O: 202-564-5744  
Fitzmorris.Amanda@epa.gov

Message

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**From:** Dunlap, David [dunlap.david@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/8/2021 2:23:04 AM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]; Meadowcroft, Micah [Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Dunlap - Resignation - Effective 1/20/2021  
**Attachments:** Dunlap - Resignation Letter 1-07-2021.pdf

Dear Andrew,

Attached is my letter of resignation effective 1/20/2021.

It has been an honor to serve you, the US EPA and the American public.

Thank you for the opportunity.

DDD

David D. Dunlap  
Deputy Assistant Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Research & Development  
Office: 202.564.6620

Message

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**From:** Gustafson, Adam [Gustafson.Adam@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 9:26:55 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]; Meadowcroft, Micah [Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Letter of Resignation  
**Attachments:** Gustafson Resignation Letter.pdf; Gustafson WH Resignation Letter.pdf

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

Attached please find my letter of resignation effective 12:00 p.m. on January 20, 2021.

Thank you.

**Adam Gustafson**

Deputy General Counsel  
Office of General Counsel  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office: 202-564-7263  
Cell: 202-836-3570

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**From:** Gunasekara, Mandy <gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 2:11 PM  
**To:** Ashbee, Blake <ashbee.blake@epa.gov>; Beck, Nancy <Beck.Nancy@epa.gov>; Benevento, Douglas <benevento.douglas@epa.gov>; Bodine, Susan <bodine.susan@epa.gov>; Bolen, Brittany <bolen.brittany@epa.gov>; Bolen, Derrick <bolen.derrick@epa.gov>; Brazauskas, Joseph <brazauskas.joseph@epa.gov>; Kral, Garrett <kral.garrett@epa.gov>; Carter, Brittany S. <carter.brittany@epa.gov>; Cody, Meredith <cody.meredith@epa.gov>; Cook, Steven <cook.steven@epa.gov>; Darwin, Henry <darwin.henry@epa.gov>; Davis, Patrick <davis.patrick@epa.gov>; Dekleva, Lynn <dekleva.lynn@epa.gov>; Dixon, Sean <dixon.sean@epa.gov>; Dominguez, Alexander <dominguez.alexander@epa.gov>; Donahue, Sean <donahue.sean@epa.gov>; Dunlap, David <dunlap.david@epa.gov>; Dunn, Alexandra <dunn.alexandra@epa.gov>; Dunn, Alexandra <dunn.alexandra@epa.gov>; English, Katherine <english.katherine@epa.gov>; Fields, Jenifer <fields.jenifer@epa.gov>; Fitzmorris, Amanda <fitzmorris.amanda@epa.gov>; Forsgren, Lee <Forsgren.Lee@epa.gov>; Fotouhi, David <Fotouhi.David@epa.gov>; Frye, Tony (Robert) <frye.robert@epa.gov>; Gulliford, Jim <gulliford.jim@epa.gov>; Hanson, Paige (Catherine) <hanson.catherine@epa.gov>; Harlow, David <harlow.david@epa.gov>; Hladick, Christopher <hladick.christopher@epa.gov>; Hoverman, Taylor <hoverman.taylor@epa.gov>; Idsal, Anne <idsal.anne@epa.gov>; Jones, Lindsey <jones.lindsey@epa.gov>; Ashbee, Blake <ashbee.blake@epa.gov>; Beck, Nancy <Beck.Nancy@epa.gov>; Benevento, Douglas <benevento.douglas@epa.gov>; Bodine, Susan <bodine.susan@epa.gov>; Bolen, Brittany <bolen.brittany@epa.gov>; Bolen, Derrick <bolen.derrick@epa.gov>; Brazauskas, Joseph <brazauskas.joseph@epa.gov>; Kral, Garrett <kral.garrett@epa.gov>; Carter, Brittany S. <carter.brittany@epa.gov>; Cody, Meredith <cody.meredith@epa.gov>; Cook, Steven <cook.steven@epa.gov>; Darwin, Henry <darwin.henry@epa.gov>; Davis, Patrick <davis.patrick@epa.gov>; Dekleva, Lynn <dekleva.lynn@epa.gov>; Terwilleger, Brock <terwilleger.brock@epa.gov>; Thiede, Kurt <thiede.kurt@epa.gov>; Tran, Victoria <tran.victoria@epa.gov>; Voyles, Travis <Voyles.Travis@epa.gov>; White, Elizabeth <white.elizabeth@epa.gov>; Wildeman, Anna <wildeman.anna@epa.gov>; Wright, Peter <wright.peter@epa.gov>; Zimmer, Nathaniel <zimmer.nathaniel@epa.gov>; Scott, Corey <scott.corey@epa.gov>; Willey, Katharine <willey.katharine@epa.gov>; Mutz, John (Fletcher) <mutz.john@epa.gov>; Lis-Coghlan, Kamila <lis-coghlan.kamila@epa.gov>; Coxen, Carrie <coxen.carrie@epa.gov>; Kolb, John (JohnMark) <kolb.john@epa.gov>; Edwards, John (Holt) <edwards.john@epa.gov>; Struhar, Kirby <struhar.kirby@epa.gov>; Girard, Alexander <girard.alexander@epa.gov>; Wheeler, Kevin <Wheeler.Kevin@epa.gov>; Zeckman, David <zeckman.david@epa.gov>; Dziadosz, Anna <dziadosz.anna@epa.gov>; Sopkin, Gregory <sopkin.gregory@epa.gov>; Skidmore, Charlotte <skidmore.charlotte@epa.gov>; Pic, Jordan <pic.jordan@epa.gov>;

Walker, Mary <walker.mary@epa.gov>; Kasper, Amanda <Kasper.Amanda@epa.gov>; Mason, Scott <Mason.Scott@epa.gov>; Hyman, Alana <Hyman.Alana@epa.gov>; Deziel, Dennis <Deziel.Dennis@epa.gov>; Block, Molly <block.molly@epa.gov>; Dankert, Charles M. (Charlie) <Dankert.Charles@epa.gov>; Striegel, Megan <Striegel.Megan@epa.gov>; Woods, Andrea <Woods.Andrea@epa.gov>; McQueen, Ken <McQueen.Ken@epa.gov>; Fischer, David <Fischer.David@epa.gov>; Raymond, Kelley <Raymond.Kelley@epa.gov>; Cory, Preston <Cory.Preston@epa.gov>; Lane, Holly <Lane.Holly@epa.gov>; Irving, John <Irving.John@epa.gov>; Moor, Karl <Moor.Karl@epa.gov>; Landeene, Sarah <Landeene.Sarah@epa.gov>; Tardif, Abigale (Abbie) <Tardif.Abigale@epa.gov>; Yarbrough, John (Daniel) <Yarbrough.Daniel@epa.gov>; Busterud, John <Busterud.John@epa.gov>; Garber, Kyle <Garber.Kyle@epa.gov>; Murray, William <Murray.William@epa.gov>; Gustafson, Adam <Gustafson.Adam@epa.gov>; Walters, Ben <Walters.Ben@epa.gov>; Leo, Diana <Leo.Diana@epa.gov>; Liebau, Joseph <Liebau.Joseph@epa.gov>; Meadows, Carrie Vicenta <Meadows.CarrieVicenta@epa.gov>; Gunasekara, Mandy <gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov>; Teresa, Tyler <Teresa.Tyler@epa.gov>; Gilliard, Paige <Gilliard.Paige@epa.gov>; Dziadosz, Patricia <Dziadosz.Patricia@epa.gov>; Washam, Todd <Washam.Todd@epa.gov>; Hewitt, James <hewitt.james@epa.gov>; Allen, Jacob <Allen.Jacob@epa.gov>; Vella, Sophia <Vella.Sophia@epa.gov>; Mills, Madeline <Mills.Madeline@epa.gov>; Axelrod, Julie <Axelrod.Julie@epa.gov>; Tatum, Stephen <Tatum.Stephen@epa.gov>; Etheridge, George <Etheridge.George@epa.gov>; Burgess, Michael <Burgess.Michael@epa.gov>; Hage, Christopher <hage.christopher@epa.gov>; Sethuraman, Jag <Sethuraman.Jag@epa.gov>; Hackett, Jonathan <hackett.jonathan@epa.gov>; Johnson, Taylor <Johnson.Taylor.C@epa.gov>; Barker, Kendal <Barker.Kendal@epa.gov>; Meadowcroft, Micah <Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov>; Mckendry, John <Mckendry.John@epa.gov>; McKeown, Paula <McKeown.Paula@epa.gov>

**Cc:** Meadowcroft, Micah <Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov>

**Subject:** Letters of Resignation

Hi All:

As part of the presidential transition, appointees are asked to resign effective no later than noon Wednesday, January 20, 2021. As you have seen in guidance materials provided by OMS, you are requested to submit a resignation letter to this effect. Non-Career SES, Schedule-C, and AD appointees should submit a letter addressed to Administrator Wheeler. Presidential Appointed, Senate-Confirmed (PAS) appointees should address President Trump.

Please see the attached document for language you can borrow in writing your letter of resignation. I have also attached the resignation memo sent from the White House laying out a similar request.

All letters can be submitted as attachments to Administrator Wheeler's official email address, [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov](mailto:wheeler.andrew@epa.gov), cc'ing WHL Micah Meadowcroft ([meadowcroft.micah@epa.gov](mailto:meadowcroft.micah@epa.gov)) and myself ([gunasekara.mandy@epa.gov](mailto:gunasekara.mandy@epa.gov)). Micah will then provide copies to EPA Executive Resources and to PPO. **Please submit your letter by Wednesday, January 13, 2021, with an effective day of January 20, 2021.**

Please note also that separation SF-52s will be distributed by AO Office of Administrative and Executive Services shortly, with instructions. OneDrive folders for the collection of separation and "check-out" documents will also be assigned this afternoon.

What transpired yesterday was abhorrent. I had the privilege of serving three U.S. Senators and four U.S. Representatives, so I take the assault on our Capitol and democratic process personally. I've heard from many of you who feel the same way. Please keep in mind the events of the last 24 hours are not reflective of any of you or any of the amazing work we achieved together to meaningfully protect public health and the environment for the American people. It has been an absolute honor to serve with you all. As we move through the final stages of the transition process together, do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,



Mandy

**Mandy M. Gunasekara**

Chief of Staff, US EPA

C: 202-923-5320

“We serve at the pleasure of the President.”

January 7, 2021

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500  
c/o Micah Meadowcroft, meadowcroft.micah@epa.gov

Dear Mr. President,

Pursuant to the Memorandum for Presidential Appointees regarding Letters of Resignation dated January 7, 2021, I hereby tender my resignation as Deputy General Counsel of the Environmental Protection Agency, effective as of 12:00 p.m. on January 20, 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Gustafson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adam Gustafson

Cc: Andrew Wheeler, EPA Administrator, wheeler.andrew@epa.gov  
Mandy Gunasekara, EPA Chief of Staff, gunasekara.mandy@epa.gov  
Micah Meadowcroft, EPA White House Liaison, meadowcroft.micah@epa.gov

Message

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**From:** OIG News [OIG.News@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/6/2021 2:30:15 PM  
**To:** Orme-Zavaleta, Jennifer [Orme-Zavaleta.Jennifer@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]; Darwin, Henry [darwin.henry@epa.gov]; Benevento, Douglas [benevento.douglas@epa.gov]; Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]; Molina, Michael [molina.michael@epa.gov]; Carpenter, Wesley [Carpenter.Wesley@epa.gov]; Bloom, David [Bloom.David@epa.gov]; LeBlanc, Andrew [LeBlanc.Andrew@epa.gov]; Atcherson, Aileen [Atcherson.Aileen@epa.gov]; Kercado Deleon, Jose [KercadoDeleon.Jose@epa.gov]; OCFO Agency AFC [OCFO\_Agency\_AFC@epa.gov]; Fotouhi, David [Fotouhi.David@epa.gov]; Willey, Katharine [willey.katharine@epa.gov]; Brazauskas, Joseph [brazauskas.joseph@epa.gov]; Hewitt, James [hewitt.james@epa.gov]; Martiyan, Stefan [MARTIYAN.STEFAN@EPA.GOV]; Benton, Michael [benton.michael@epa.gov]; Brennan, Thomas [Brennan.Thomas@epa.gov]; Ross, David P [ross.davidp@epa.gov]; Wildeman, Anna [wildeman.anna@epa.gov]; Best-Wong, Benita [Best-Wong.Benita@epa.gov]; Robbins, Chris [Robbins.Chris@epa.gov]; Dunlap, David [dunlap.david@epa.gov]; Rodan, Bruce [rodan.bruce@epa.gov]; Steenbock, John [Steenbock.John@epa.gov]; VanDrunick, Suzanne [vanDrunick.Suzanne@epa.gov]; Goodin, John [Goodin.John@epa.gov]; Hingeley, Maureen [Hingeley.Maureen@epa.gov]; Crawford, Tiffany [Crawford.Tiffany@epa.gov]; Sinks, Thomas (Tom) [Sinks.Tom@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** OIG Report: "Office of Research and Development Initiatives to Address Threats and Risks to Public Health and the Environment from Plastic Pollution Within the Waters of the United States"  
**Attachments:** \_epaig\_20210106-21-N-0052\_cert.pdf

Attached is the EPA Office of Inspector General report, *Office of Research and Development Initiatives to Address Threats and Risks to Public Health and the Environment from Plastic Pollution Within the Waters of the United States* (Report No. 21-N-0052). This report will be available to the public on the OIG's website at [www.epa.gov/oig](http://www.epa.gov/oig).



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

January 6, 2021

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** Office of Research and Development Initiatives to Address Threats and Risks to Public Health and the Environment from Plastic Pollution Within the Waters of the United States  
Report No. 21-N-0052

**FROM:** Sean W. O'Donnell

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sean W. O'Donnell".

**TO:** Jennifer Orme-Zavaleta, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Science and EPA Science Advisor  
Office of Research and Development

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Inspector General initiated an audit to identify the extent to which the EPA's existing Clean Water Act programs and Office of Research and Development research initiatives address threats and risks to public health and the environment from plastic pollution within the waters of the United States. The project number for this audit is OA&E-FY19-0086. We performed our work within two EPA offices: the Office of Water, or OW, and the Office of Research and Development, or ORD.

This report contains our conclusions related to the ORD and closes our work on this aspect of the audit with no recommendations. We will issue a separate report on our findings related to the OW.

## **Background**

### ***Microplastics***

Plastic debris in the aquatic environment presents a persistent and growing environmental problem. Worldwide, more than 29 million metric tons of plastic enter the environment each year.<sup>1</sup> Over time, in some cases over hundreds of years, plastic objects fragment into progressively smaller and more numerous particles without substantial chemical degradation. Particles smaller than 5 millimeters are defined as *microplastics* and account for approximately 90 percent of plastic in the ocean.

In 2017, the EPA convened a Microplastics Expert Workshop to identify and prioritize the scientific information needed to understand the risks posed by microplastics to human and ecological health.

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<sup>1</sup> Palardy, Jim, "[Science Study Shows That Nearly 80% of the Annual Plastic Flow Into the Environment Can Be Stopped Using Existing Technology](#)," PEW Charitable Trusts, July 23, 2020.

## **EPA's ORD**

The ORD primarily focuses on providing a scientific and technical foundation for the EPA to fulfill its statutory obligations and help Agency, state, and other partners address environmental and public health challenges. The ORD is composed of six national research programs, which aim to deliver a cleaner, safer, and healthier environment for all Americans. One of those research programs is the Safe and Sustainable Water Resources program, or SSWR.

By collaborating with EPA program offices, such as the OW, the ORD develops Strategic Research Action Plans, or StRAPs, for each national research program. Each program's StRAP outlines a four-year research strategy to advance the program's goals and the cross-Agency priorities identified in the EPA's Strategic Plan.

The 2019–2022 SSWR StRAP organizes the SSWR's activities into three interrelated research areas:

- Watersheds.
- Nutrients and harmful algal blooms.
- Water treatment and infrastructure.

Plastics research occurs under the "Watersheds" research area, specifically under StRAP Output 1.4:

*Methods to identify and quantify micro/nanoplastics in environmental matrices.* Research will address plastic pollution in the aquatic environment by establishing reliable and reproducible methods for micro/nanoplastics collection, extraction, characterization, and quantification in sediment and surface water.

## **Scope and Methodology**

We conducted this work from November 2019 to October 2020. While our overall audit, which is still ongoing, is being conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards, the work related to this report does not constitute an audit done in accordance with these standards. However, we did follow the OIG's quality control procedures for ensuring that the information in this report is accurate and supported.

This report addresses the ORD's research prioritization process for the SSWR StRAP. We did not evaluate other ORD-led StRAP development processes. To conduct our work, we met with ORD and OW managers and staff. We conducted interviews with scientists at the ORD's Atlantic Coastal Environmental Sciences Division laboratory in Narragansett, Rhode Island. We also spoke to researchers and staff at nongovernmental organizations and academic institutions. We analyzed ORD documents for information pertaining to microplastic research priorities.

## **Prior Report**

On April 9, 2018, we issued Report No. [18-P-0151](#), *EPA's Safe and Sustainable Water Resources Research Program Is Delivering Timely and Relevant Data to the Office of Water*. We reported that ORD SSWR research products were relevant to the OW and were delivered in a timely fashion. We also reported that these products were used or will be used to protect America's waters. We issued no recommendations as a result of that audit.

## Results

The EPA's research into plastics is in its early stages, and the ORD has not yet conducted enough research to determine risks to public health and the environment from plastic exposure. The 2019–2022 SSWR StRAP, issued in March 2020, was the first time the ORD included plastics as a research priority. Specifically, the StRAP states that the ORD will deliver recommendations for best practices and standardized methodologies to characterize micro/nanoplastics in sediment and surface water.

In June 2017, the ORD and the OW conducted a Microplastics Expert Workshop with participants from federal agencies, academic institutions, and nongovernmental organizations. The participants identified a broad range of research needs for determining the human health and environmental risks of microplastics, including:

- Establishing precise methods for analysis.
- Conducting research on sources, transport, fate, and distribution in the environment.
- Creating standardized toxicity tests.
- Creating methods and conducting research to characterize human exposure and impacts.

In January 2018, the ORD started developing SSWR StRAP research priorities by consulting with subject matter experts from the EPA, states, and tribes. This process involved several steps, including:

- Problem identification.
- Development of research outputs.
- Review and comment periods for EPA staff and stakeholders.

In April 2019, the ORD issued a draft SSWR StRAP, which identified microplastics as an area of concern for potential impacts to aquatic life and human health. The draft StRAP stated that:

[R]esearch efforts are needed to better understand the exposure to and potential effects of micro/nano plastic pollution in the aquatic environment to inform CWA [Clean Water Act] regulatory programs and voluntary approaches. Standardized, reliable, reproducible, and environmentally representative methods are fundamental and of paramount importance for sample collection, extraction, characterization, and quantification. These methods will provide the foundation to investigate potential adverse health outcomes in humans and aquatic organisms exposed to micro/nanoplastics.

In the draft SSWR StRAP, the ORD identified three priority areas for microplastics research:

- Develop methods to determine the quantity of microplastics in the environment.
- Investigate the human health effects caused by drinking water containing microplastics.
- Determine the effects of microplastic exposure to aquatic species.

In the final SSWR StRAP, which was issued in March 2020, the OW and the ORD narrowed these three initial priority areas into one:

- Methods to identify and quantify microplastics and nanoplastics in environmental matrices (or “sampling methods”).

According to OW and ORD senior leaders, the decision to narrow the microplastics priority area was necessary for two reasons: 1) sampling methods need to be established before the human health and environmental effects of microplastics exposure can be investigated, and 2) the ORD's resources were deployed to address other research needs in the 2019–2022 SSWR StRAP.

## Conclusion

The 2019–2022 SSWR StRAP commits the ORD to deliver recommendations for best practices and standardized methodologies to characterize micro/nanoplastics in sediment and surface water. With these recommendations, the ORD can identify and prioritize the scientific information needed to understand the risks posed by microplastics to human health and the environment from plastic pollution within the waters of the United States. In 2021, the ORD and the OW plan to begin developing the next set of SSWR StRAP research priorities based on the OW's needs. This process will determine whether plastics continue to be a research priority.

cc: Andrew Wheeler, Administrator

Henry Darwin, Assistant Deputy Administrator

Doug Benevento, Associate Deputy Administrator

Mandy Gunasekara, Chief of Staff

Michael Molina, Deputy Chief of Staff/Operations

Tom Brennan, Director, Science Advisory Board Staff Office

David Bloom, Agency Follow-Up Official (the CFO)

David P. Ross, Assistant Administrator for Water

Andrew LeBlanc, Agency Follow-Up Coordinator

David Fotouhi, Acting General Counsel

Joseph Brazauskas, Acting Associate Administrator for Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations

James Hewitt, Associate Administrator for Public Affairs

Anna Wildeman, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Water

Benita Best-Wong, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Water

Chris Robbins, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Management, Office of Research and Development

David Dunlap, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Science Policy, Office of Research and Development

Bruce Rodan, Associate Director for Science, Office of Research and Development

John Steenbock, Acting Associate Assistant Administrator for Research and Development

Suzanne VanDrunick, National Program Director for EPA's Safe and Sustainable Water Resources Research Program, Office of Research and Development

Thomas Sinks, Director, Office of the Science Advisor, Office of Research and Development

John Goodin, Director, Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds, Office of Water

Stefan Martiyan, Director, Office of Continuous Improvement, Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Michael Benton, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of the Administrator

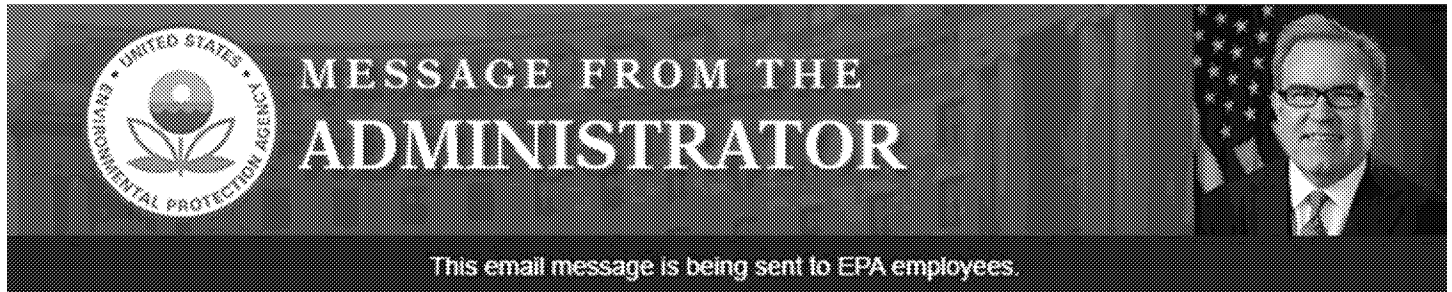
Maureen Hingeley, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of Research and Development

Tiffany Crawford, Audit Follow-Up Coordinator, Office of Water

Message

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**From:** Message from the Administrator [messagefromtheadadministrator@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 4:41:16 PM  
**To:** Message from the Administrator [messagefromtheadadministrator@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Statement on Yesterday's Events



Dear Colleagues,

As an American and as a 14 year veteran Senate staffer, I was completely disgusted by yesterday's events. There is no place for violence in settling political disputes. During my entire career I have upheld the rule of law and the Constitution of the United States. I take my oath of office, my obligation to the Agency and to the American People very seriously.

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Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator



Message

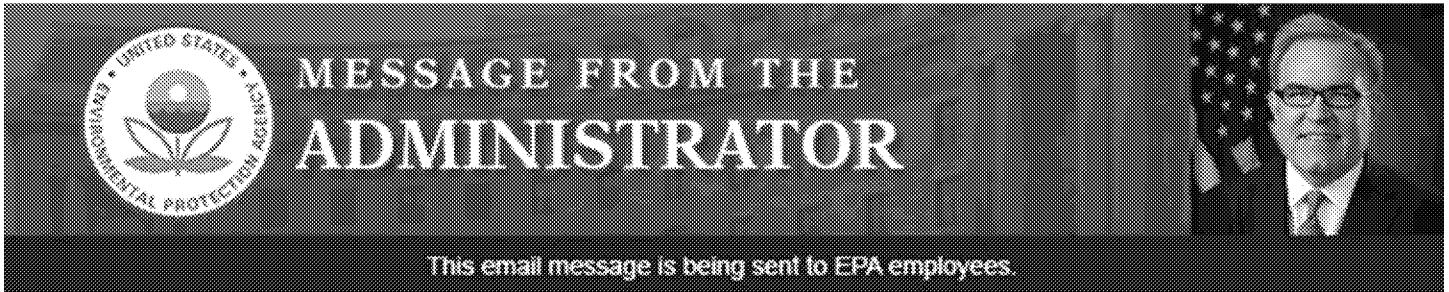
---

**From:** [REDACTED] Ex. 6 [REDACTED]@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 4:56:30 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** FW: Statement on Yesterday's Events

Respectfully, Too Little Too Late.

---

**From:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 07, 2021 11:41 AM  
**To:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Statement on Yesterday's Events



Dear Colleagues,

As an American and as a 14 year veteran Senate staffer, I was completely disgusted by yesterday's events. There is no place for violence in settling political disputes. During my entire career I have upheld the rule of law and the Constitution of the United States. I take my oath of office, my obligation to the Agency and to the American People very seriously.

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Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator

Message

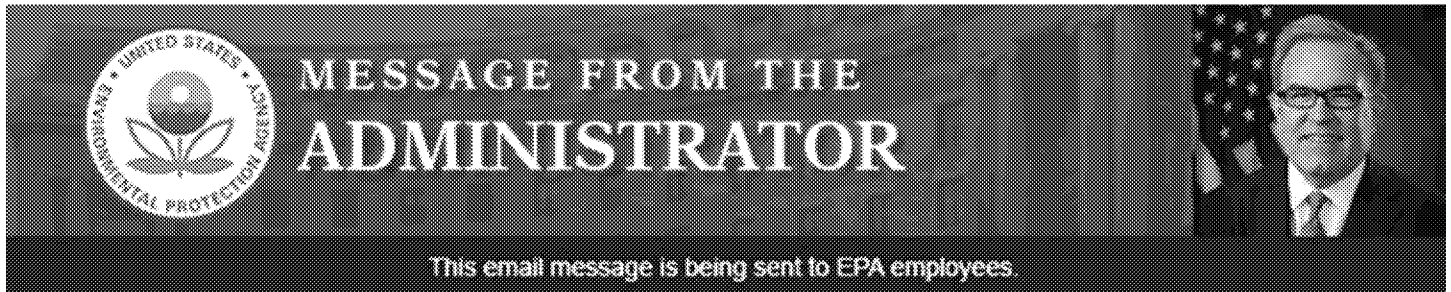
---

**From:** Bierschenk, Arnold [bierschenk.arnold@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 4:47:11 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** RE: Statement on Yesterday's Events

Thank you.

---

**From:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 07, 2021 10:41 AM  
**To:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Statement on Yesterday's Events



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Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator

Message

---

**From:** Phelps, John [Phelps.John@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 5:18:35 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** FW: Statement on Yesterday's Events

Good afternoon:

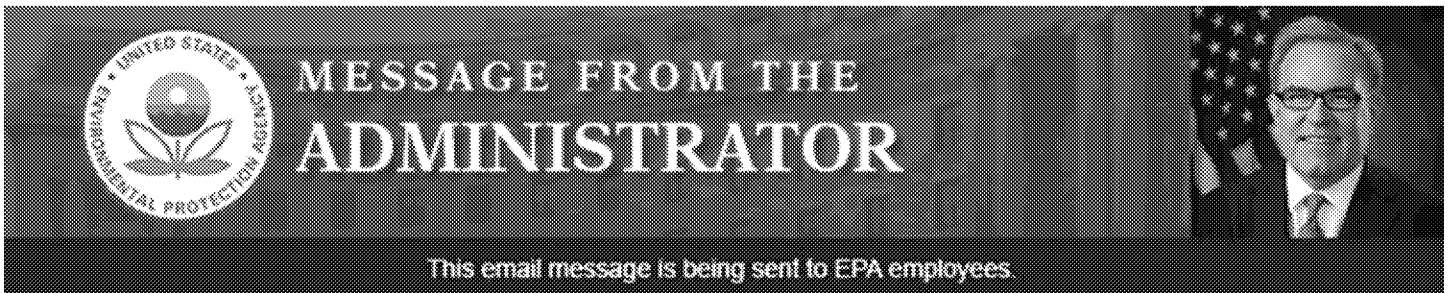
Please extend to Mr. Wheeler an appreciation for his insights and comments. It is re-assuring that a smooth transition is occurring. Also, please wish him well in his future endeavors not knowing what the upcoming changes may mean to him.

Thank you,

Jack Phelps, Human Resource Specialist QA/QC  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
OARM-Cincinnati Human Resources Shared Service Center  
26 W. Martin Luther King Drive, MS: N132  
Cincinnati, OH 45268  
Phone/Fax Number: 513-569-7640/513-569-7826  
Branch Common Line: 513-569-7700/7822 or 7009

---

**From:** Message from the Administrator <[messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov](mailto:messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 11:41 AM  
**To:** Message from the Administrator <[messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov](mailto:messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Statement on Yesterday's Events



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Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator

Message

---

**From:** Hunt, JuanCarlos [Hunt.Juancarlos@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 5:20:34 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** RE: Statement on Yesterday's Events

Good day, Administrator Wheeler,

Thank you. My small staff appreciated me sending an email out regarding the events, so I can assure you that thousands of employees will appreciate receiving a message from the Administrator. Thank you for leading.

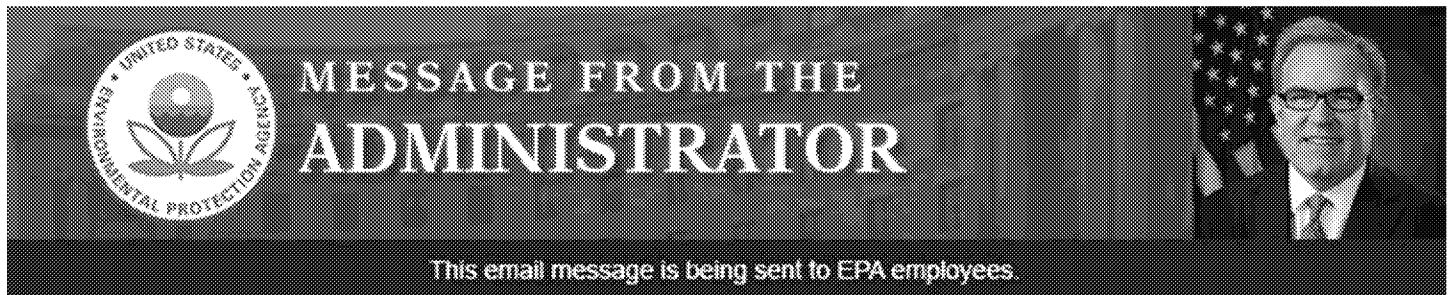
Sincerely,

JuanCarlos M. Hunt  
Director, Office of Civil Rights  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460  
Phone: 202-564-0077

*"Carpe diem"*

---

**From:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 11:41 AM  
**To:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Statement on Yesterday's Events



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Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator

Message

**From:** Nelson, Rosemarie [nelson.rosemarie@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 5:43:19 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew [wheeler.andrew@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** FW: Statement on Yesterday's Events

Thank you, Sir, for your service and straightforwardness. This note is very much appreciated. Although we were met with challenges and differences of opinions, we were still able to fulfill our mission and create some historic moments of our own. Wishing you all the best.

~Rosemarie.

*Rosemarie Nelson, CM, MPA, MHRM*  
*Restoration & Site Evaluation Branch*  
*Superfund & Emergency Management Division*  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 4  
61 Forsyth Street SW – MS 9T25 | Atlanta, Georgia 30303

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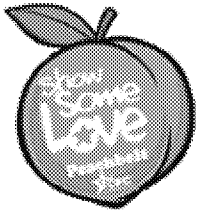
☎ 404-562-8728 📠 470-562-6426

✉ [nelson.rosemarie@epa.gov](mailto:nelson.rosemarie@epa.gov)

🌐 <http://www.epa.gov/>

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Also, please indicate to the sender that you have received this communication in error, and delete the copy you received. Thank you.

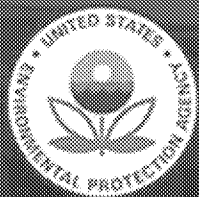


Live Green.

Leadership is an Action Not a Position

---

**From:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 11:41 AM  
**To:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Statement on Yesterday's Events



MESSAGE FROM THE  
ADMINISTRATOR



This email message is being sent to EPA employees.

Dear Colleagues,

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Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator

Message

---

**From:** adm15.arwheeler.email [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=6F061A85B2E14828934C1A85CC4D5122-ADM15.ARWHE]  
**Sent:** 1/6/2021 7:44:02 PM  
**To:** Wright, Peter [wright.peter@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Hoverman, Taylor [hoverman.taylor@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Re: Brownfield Video

Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 6, 2021, at 12:53 PM, Wright, Peter <wright.peter@epa.gov> wrote:

Andrew

I have had the opportunity to review the video and think it does a good job of highlighting how EPA and EPA's Brownfields grants can really make a difference in the redevelopment of historical structure. In email conversation with Taylor I suggested we could provide links to websites for viewers who are intrigued by the video and want to learn more about the projects and the current use of the rehabilitated buildings. We are gathering those links. Finally, we will be prepared to help get this rolled out to national and state brownfield officials and organizations.

Peter

---

**From:** adm15.arwheeler.email <adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 6, 2021 6:03 AM  
**To:** Wright, Peter <wright.peter@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Brownfield Video

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "adm15.arwheeler.email" <adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov>  
**Date:** January 5, 2021 at 8:56:00 PM EST  
**To:** "Allen, Jacob" <Allen.Jacob@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** "Grantham, Nancy" <Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov>, "Molina, Michael" <molina.michael@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Brownfield Video

It looks good, there are still two close ups of me and should be edited out, we need an opening graphic and at the end we need to tell people how to contact the brownfields program for more info. Good work.

Peter, have you seen this yet? We need to get it circulated next week, I assume the state brownfields people as well as the appropriate national organizations.



---

**From:** Allen, Jacob <Allen.Jacob@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 5, 2021 5:04 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email <adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** Grantham, Nancy <Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov>; Molina, Michael  
<molina.michael@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Brownfield Video

Hello Administrator,

This is the final version of the Brownsfield video. Let me know your thoughts and if we need to change anything before it goes out to the regions.

<https://> **Ex. 6**

Best,  
Jake

**Jacob Allen**  
*Special Assistant for Video and Media*  
*Office of the Administrator*  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20460  
M: 202-923-6572

Message

---

**From:** adm15.arwheeler.email [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=6F061A85B2E14828934C1A85CC4D5122-ADM15.ARWHE]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 7:20:10 PM  
**To:** Hyman, Alana [Hyman.Alana@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Vella, Sophia [Vella.Sophia@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Re: debriefing

Ok

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 7, 2021, at 10:11 AM, Hyman, Alana <Hyman.Alana@epa.gov> wrote:

Would you like me to schedule this for you sometime next week?

Alana

---

**From:** Glazier, Kelly <Glazier.Kelly@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 6, 2021 12:42 PM  
**To:** Dickerson, Aaron <dickerson.aaron@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** debriefing

Aaron,

Thanks for your help earlier this week. I wanted to follow up with you about the required debriefings that need to occur as well.

In particular, the Administrator, Michael, Doug and Chad all have SCI and need to be debriefed and sign the associated non-disclosure agreements.

We'd be happy to do them individually, or better, debrief them all, virtually, at one time. Do you think we can arrange for that? Or what would work best. The debrief can go on the calendar for 30 minutes, but shouldn't take that long.

Thanks.

Kelly

Kelly Glazier

Director, Security Management Division

OA/OMS

202 564 0351



Message

---

**From:** adm15.arwheeler.email [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=6F061A85B2E14828934C1A85CC4D5122-ADM15.ARWHE]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 9:59:10 PM  
**To:** Bodine, Susan [bodine.susan@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Benevento, Douglas [benevento.douglas@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Re: Please express my appreciation

Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 7, 2021, at 1:20 PM, Bodine, Susan <bodine.susan@epa.gov> wrote:

---

**From:** Leff, Karin <Leff.Karin@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 2:19 PM  
**To:** Bodine, Susan <bodine.susan@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Please express my appreciation

Susan,

If you think it's appropriate, please express my appreciation to the Administrator for his recent message on yesterday's events at the Capitol. I've spoken to others who also are appreciative of the message he sent. Since one can't respond directly to a Message from the Administrator, I thought he might be interested in the good feedback his message is generating. Karin

---

Karin Leff  
Director, Federal Facilities Enforcement Office  
MC 2261A  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington DC 20460  
202 564-7068  
202 236-3669

NOTICE: ENFORCEMENT CONFIDENTIAL AND/OR ATTORNEY CLIENT PRIVILEGED: DO NOT RELEASE UNDER FOIA: This message is being sent by or on behalf of an attorney. It is intended exclusively for the individual(s) or entity(s) to whom or to which it is addressed. This communication may contain information that is proprietary, privileged, or confidential or otherwise legally exempt from disclosure. If you are not the named addressee, you are not authorized to read, print, retain, copy, or disseminate this message or any part of it. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately by email and delete all copies of the message.

Message

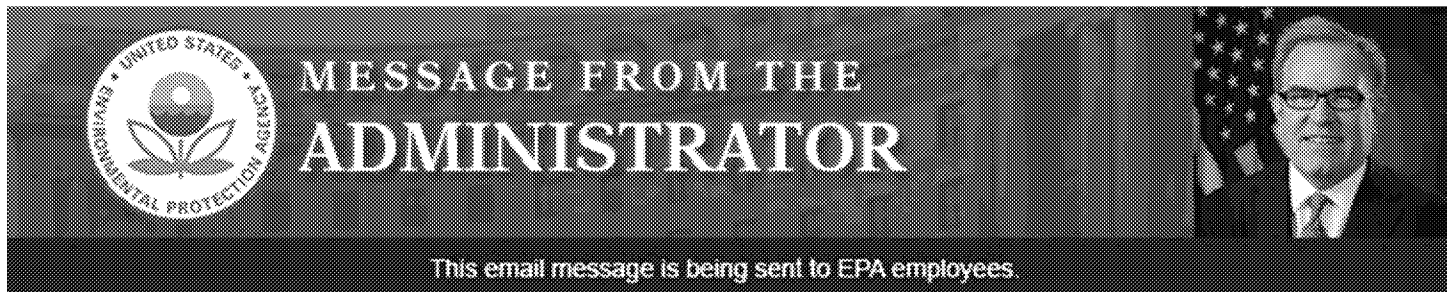
---

**From:** adm15.arwheeler.email [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=6F061A85B2E14828934C1A85CC4D5122-ADM15.ARWHE]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 9:48:43 PM  
**To:** Brett Doyle [brett\_doyle@coc.senate.gov]  
**Subject:** Fwd: Statement on Yesterday's Events

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Date:** January 7, 2021 at 10:43:47 AM CST  
**To:** Message from the Administrator <messagefromtheadministrator@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Statement on Yesterday's Events



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Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator

Message

---

**From:** Lopez, Peter [lopez.peter@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/6/2021 7:42:59 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]; Meadowcroft, Micah [Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Re: Letter on behalf of Peter D. Lopez

Thank you Beth!

Sincerely,  
Pete

Peter D. Lopez  
Regional Administrator - R2  
290 Broadway, 26th Floor  
New York, NY 10007-1866  
(212) 637-5000 (work)  
(917) 376-2190 (cell)  
(212) 637-5024 (fax)

On Jan 6, 2021, at 12:23 PM, Lopez, Peter <lopez.peter@epa.gov> wrote:

**Beth Soltani**  
Executive Assistant to the Regional Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2  
290 Broadway  
New York, NY 10007  
Office: 212.637.5038  
Mobile: 646.531.2763

<LTR to Administrator Wheeler 1-6-21.pdf>

Message

---

**From:** Walters, Ben [Walters.Ben@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/6/2021 8:11:22 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]; Molina, Michael [molina.michael@epa.gov]; Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]; Benevento, Douglas [benevento.douglas@epa.gov]; Brazauskas, Joseph [brazauskas.joseph@epa.gov]; Coxen, Carrie [coxen.carrie@epa.gov]; Johnson, Taylor [Johnson.Taylor.C@epa.gov]; McFaul, Jessica [mcfaul.jessica@epa.gov]; Rodriguez, Alejandra (Allie) [rodriguez.alejandra@epa.gov]; Walters, Ben [Walters.Ben@epa.gov]; Hewitt, James [hewitt.james@epa.gov]; Block, Molly [block.molly@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** 1.6.20 Daily Media Brief  
**Attachments:** 1.6.20 Daily Media Report.docx

Sir,

Please see attached/below for today's media brief.

**Daily Media Brief 1/6/20**

Most common and notable inquiry topic

1. David Ross

**Inside EPA/Lara Beaven**

Topic: David Ross departure

Status: Referred to email that went out

- Additional Inquiries: Politico (Annie Snider)

**AP/Travis Loller**

Topic: Civil rights enforcement

Status: Developing Response

**Bloomberg Green/Margaret Rhodes**

Topic: Furniture waste

Status: Developing Response

**E&E News/Hannah M. Northey**

Topic: David Ross interview request

Status: Developing Response

**E&E News/Jeremy Jacobs**

Topic: Changes to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act

Status: Developing Response

**EE News/Kelsey Brugger**

Topic: Guidance documents

Status: Developing Response

**EE News/Sean Reilly**

Topic: Pivotal science rule

Status: Developing Response

**KSWT/Jose A. Teposte**

Topic: Lung Cancer prevention  
Status: Developing Response

**MinnPost/Gregg Aamot**

Topic: Clean Water Act  
Status: Developing Response

**Mississippi Today/Alex Rozier**

Topic: ECHO data  
Status: Developing Response

**National Journal/Brian Dabbs**

Topic: DRA  
Status: Developing Response

**Slade.com/Nitish Pahwa**

Topic: Greenhouse Gases Equivalencies Calculator  
Status: Developing Response

**Texas Standard radio/Michael Marks**

Topic: Register aldicarb in Texas  
Status: Developing Response

**E&E News/Pamela King**

Topic: Denver smog ruling  
Status: Referred to DOJ

**The Hill/Rebecca Beitsch**

Topic: Nancy Beck  
Status: Did Not Respond

**NPR/Jeff Brady**

Topic: Biden transition response  
Status: Did Not Respond

**Ben Walters**

*Special Advisor for Digital Media*  
*Office of the Administrator – OPA*  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20460  
M: 202-923-5203



## **Daily Media Brief 1/6/20**

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Status: Referred to email that went out

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Topic: Civil rights enforcement

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Status: Developing Response

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Topic: David Ross interview request

Status: Developing Response

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Status: Developing Response

### **EE News/Kelsey Brugger**

Topic: Guidance documents

Status: Developing Response

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Topic: Pivotal science rule

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Status: Developing Response

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Status: Developing Response

**National Journal/Brian Dabbs**

Topic: DRA

Status: Developing Response

**Slade.com/Nitish Pahwa**

Topic: Greenhouse Gases Equivalencies Calculator

Status: Developing Response

**Texas Standard radio/Michael Marks**

Topic: Register aldicarb in Texas

Status: Developing Response

**E&E News/Pamela King**

Topic: Denver smog ruling

Status: Referred to DOJ

**The Hill/Rebecca Beitsch**

Topic: Nancy Beck

Status: Did Not Respond

**NPR/Jeff Brady**

Topic: Biden transition response

Status: Did Not Respond

Message

**From:** Block, Molly [block.molly@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/6/2021 9:51:32 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** FW: January 6 -- E&E News PM is ready

---

**From:** E&E News  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 6, 2021 4:51:21 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Block, Molly  
**Subject:** January 6 -- E&E News PM is ready

[Read today's E&E News PM on the web.](#)

AN E&E NEWS PUBLICATION

## E&E NEWS PM — Wed., January 6, 2021



READ FULL EDITION

### 1. ELECTION 2020:

#### **Chaos as Trump backers storm the Capitol**

Capitol Hill descended into chaos today, with supporters of President Trump breaching the Capitol and forcing the House and Senate to recess shortly after lawmakers began debating objections to the Electoral College results.

### THIS AFTERNOON'S STORIES

#### 2. ARCTIC:

#### **'Epic failure': Trump's ANWR sale comes up short**

#### 3. CONGRESS:

#### **FERC commissioner takes to Twitter to defend McConnell**

#### 4. EPA:

#### **Wheeler op-ed slams 'unintended burdens' of renewable energy**

### UPCOMING HEARINGS AND MARKUPS

#### 5. CALENDAR:

#### **Activity for January 4 - January 10, 2021**

---

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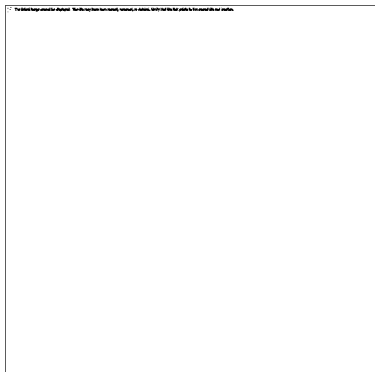
To send a press release, email [editorial@eenews.net](mailto:editorial@eenews.net).

---

#### ABOUT E&E NEWS PM – LATE-BREAKING NEWS

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E&E News PM is written and produced by the staff of E&E News. A late afternoon roundup providing coverage of all the breaking and developing policy news from Capitol Hill, around the country and around the world, E&E News PM is a must-read for the key players who need to be ahead of the next day's headlines. E&E News PM publishes daily at 4:30 p.m.



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**From:** Doyle, Brett (COC) [Brett\_Doyle@coc.senate.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 2:36:39 AM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Benevento, Douglas [benevento.douglas@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Fwd: TLG - Stepping Back from Civil War  
**Attachments:** TLG 01-06-21(2) Stepping Back from Civil War.pdf

---

**From:** The Lindsey Group  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 6, 2021 9:14:12 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Karolin Junnila  
**Subject:** TLG - Stepping Back from Civil War

### Stepping Back from Civil War

Today's events in Washington were truly horrifying. The Constitution's basic institutional structure has come under assault. While we have warned of a possible descent into civil war for most of this year, we never thought it was a certainty. That today's events would be inspired by a President of the United States (even this one) seemed unthinkable. We were wrong. The question now is whether our government institutions can put this chapter in American history to rest. We believe that they will.

First, those around Trump may well have decided he should be removed from office. A mechanism to do this is the 25th Amendment. Its basic condition has been met: the President is incapable of carrying out the duties of office. Any president who effectively chooses to incite insurrection is not fit for office, no matter the motivation or explanation for his actions. There would be long-term advantages to removing Trump this way. It would be the President's closest confidants – the Vice President and the Cabinet, men and women he selected – who would carry out the act. It would establish the precedent that some things cannot be tolerated regardless of political affiliation. In the narrow partisan sense, it would also help distance these individuals and the Republican Party from Trump in a very decisive way.

If removal via the 25th Amendment does not occur, there will likely be mass resignations from the Administration. This would render the mechanisms of government even less effective and create a dangerous power vacuum. Decisions must still be made throughout the next two weeks and people must be in place to make them. The other likely course of action is a restart of the impeachment process. It can happen quickly. Time-consuming rules can be easily suspended in the House and waived by unanimous consent in the Senate. Who would want to defend a man who essentially led an invasion of both chambers? This has become an institutional issue. But the impeachment process would bring to the fore folks like Adam Schiff rather than those seeking to calm the waters. The 25th Amendment is far preferable in terms of saving the Republic.

Second, in two weeks President Biden will have to make some very tough decisions. Although very difficult politically, the phrase "with malice toward none, with charity for all" has particular merit. Lincoln adopted that approach following a four-year Civil War that killed four percent of the country's male population in direct combat and tens of thousands of others as well. It was also a decision taken in military terms when Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox. And it was the right one to begin the healing process.

There will be suggestions that “Trump supporters are as crazy as he is and need to be suppressed,” as well as calls to “take guns out of the hands of those who might do such things.” Perhaps our ever-censorious social media moguls will block even more honest debate on the view that anything that differs from their point of view is seditious. One need only review the rhetoric and “news” commentary during the campaign to hear such things, and that was before today’s events. The one sure way to guarantee a lengthy and pervasive civil war is to use Trump’s derangement as an excuse to settle political scores or to gain more power over one’s fellow Americans. This will be a temptation; deep-seated hate exists among many on both sides of the political spectrum. But Biden must resist it, and we believe he will. He is a man whose entire life has been spent inside relatively collegial political institutions and his loyalties are to a system that supersedes mere party affiliations.

Market participants should not underestimate the seriousness of the crisis in which America now finds itself. No amount of Quantitative Easing will solve our economic problems if political retribution sets in or if Trump’s behavior is not condemned by members of his own party. The \$2000 checks that Trump called for could be made out for \$20,000 and it would not paper over a descent into either civil war or oppression. Neither capitalism nor democracy can long survive either. Adventurism by foreign nations is also a real threat. But our backgrounds make us institutional “believers,” and we believe that even when sorely tested, those institutions will prevail with the right kinds of vision and leadership.

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January 6, 2021

## Stepping Back from Civil War

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There will be suggestions that "Trump supporters are as crazy as he is and need to be suppressed," as well as calls to "take guns out of the hands of those who might do such things." Perhaps our ever-censorious social media moguls will block even more honest debate on the view that anything that differs from their point of view is seditious. One need only review the rhetoric and "news" commentary during the campaign to hear such things, and that was before today's events. The one sure way to guarantee a lengthy and pervasive civil war is to use Trump's derangement as an excuse to settle political scores or to gain more power over one's fellow Americans. This will be a temptation; deep-seated hate exists among many on both sides of the political spectrum. But Biden must resist it, and we believe he will. He is a man whose entire life has been spent inside relatively collegial political institutions and his loyalties are to a system that supersedes mere party affiliations.

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Message

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**From:** EPAExecSec [EPAExecSec@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 12:50:55 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** FW: Thank You

---

**From:** Carroll, Gregory <Carroll.Gregory@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 7:50 AM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew <wheeler.andrew@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Thank You

Administrator Wheeler – I don't know what the future holds for you, but while I have the opportunity I want to thank you for your leadership of the Agency. I really respect your intellect, integrity, and management style and I credit you with improving staff morale at a time when that was really needed.

From one southwest-Ohioan to another, I wish you well.

Greg

Greg Carroll, Director  
Technical Support Center  
Standards and Risk Management Division  
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water  
U.S. EPA  
26 W. Martin Luther King Dr. (MS-140)  
Cincinnati, OH 45268  
(513) 569-7948



Message

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**From:** EPAExecSec [EPAExecSec@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 12:51:09 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** FW: Resignation Letter  
**Attachments:** Amanda Kasper Resignation\_01062021.pdf

---

**From:** Kasper, Amanda <Kasper.Amanda@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 6, 2021 7:26 PM  
**To:** Wheeler, Andrew <wheeler.andrew@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** Gunasekara, Mandy <gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov>; Molina, Michael <molina.michael@epa.gov>; Meadowcroft, Micah <Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Resignation Letter

Administrator Wheeler,

After serious consideration today, I have attached my letter of resignation. While it is stated in the letter, I want to reaffirm just how much I have valued your leadership and all that I have learned from the opportunity to serve with you and the entire team.

Again, thank you for your trust and confidence throughout my time with the EPA. I will always be grateful.

Best,

Amanda Kasper  
Senior Advisor to the Administrator  
Office of the Administrator (AO/IO)  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20460  
O: 202-564-1524 | M: 202-302-7765

January 6, 2021

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

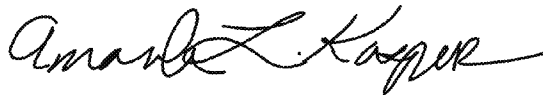
The intent of this letter is to submit my resignation as your Senior Advisor at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) effective Wednesday, January 13, 2021 to allow for proper administrative offboarding.

Since joining the EPA in July 2019, I have greatly admired and respected your leadership and how you inspired true belief in the fundamental importance of our agency's mission and workforce. However, following today's events, I cannot, in good faith or conscience, continue to uphold my duties on behalf of the Administration.

Please know that I am thankful for the opportunity to have served under your strong leadership and will always reflect on my time in service as one of the most rewarding experiences of my professional career.

It is my sincere hope that our paths will cross again.

Respectfully,



Amanda Kasper  
Senior Advisor to the Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Personal email: Ex. 6

Mobile: Ex. 6

CC: Mandy Gunasekara  
Michael Molina  
Micah Meadowcroft

Message

---

**From:** Ross, David P [ross.davidp@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 4:38:56 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]; Benevento, Douglas [benevento.douglas@epa.gov]; Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]; Molina, Michael [molina.michael@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Ex. 6  
**Subject:** Thanks!

I wanted to send a special thank you to this special leadership team. Your work for this agency has been amazing, and you should all feel proud of your collective accomplishments. Please stay in touch and I can't wait to track your future successes! My information is: Ex. 6

Dave

David P. Ross  
Assistant Administrator  
Office of Water, EPA  
ross.davidp@epa.gov

Message

---

**From:** Grantham, Nancy [Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 4:50:22 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]; Molina, Michael [molina.michael@epa.gov]; Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** RE: Statement from the Administrator

It just went out . please stay safe

**Nancy Grantham**  
**Principal Deputy Associate Administrator**  
**Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Office of Public Affairs**  
**202-564-6879 (desk)**  
**202-253-7056 (cell)**  
[grantham.nancy@epa.gov](mailto:grantham.nancy@epa.gov)

---

**From:** adm15.arwheeler.email <adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 11:50 AM  
**To:** Molina, Michael <molina.michael@epa.gov>; Grantham, Nancy <Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov>; Gunasekara, Mandy <gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Statement from the Administrator

Let's put this out thanks team

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 7, 2021, at 10:20 AM, Molina, Michael <[molina.michael@epa.gov](mailto:molina.michael@epa.gov)> wrote:

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Grantham, Nancy" <[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov](mailto:Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov)>  
**Date:** January 7, 2021 at 10:13:34 AM CST  
**To:** "Hewitt, James" <[hewitt.james@epa.gov](mailto:hewitt.james@epa.gov)>, "Molina, Michael" <[molina.michael@epa.gov](mailto:molina.michael@epa.gov)>  
**Cc:** "Gunasekara, Mandy" <[Gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov](mailto:Gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov)>, "Benevento, Douglas" <[benevento.douglas@epa.gov](mailto:benevento.douglas@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Statement from the Administrator

Here is the final for review – please let me know if good to go thanks ng

<image003.jpg>

As an American and as a 14 year veteran Senate staffer, I was completely disgusted by yesterday's event. There is no place for violence in settling political disputes. During my entire career I have upheld the rule of law and the Constitution of the United States. I take my oath of office, my obligation to the Agency and the American People very seriously.

In my first speech to you, the Agency employees, I vowed to leave the Agency stronger than I found it. To date, we have provided the Biden transition team with hundreds of documents and over fifty briefings. My intention is to continue to honor the mission of the Agency, to protect public health and the environment. I will be in the office on January 20th in order to provide as smooth a transition for the Agency as possible.

Andrew Wheeler  
Administrator

**Nancy Grantham**  
**Principal Deputy Associate Administrator**  
**Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Office of Public Affairs**  
**202-564-6879 (desk)**  
**202-253-7056 (cell)**  
[grantham.nancy@epa.gov](mailto:grantham.nancy@epa.gov)

---

**From:** Hewitt, James <[hewitt.james@epa.gov](mailto:hewitt.james@epa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 11:08 AM  
**To:** Grantham, Nancy <[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov](mailto:Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov)>; Molina, Michael <[molina.michael@epa.gov](mailto:molina.michael@epa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Gunasekara, Mandy <[gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov](mailto:gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov)>; Benevento, Douglas <[benevento.douglas@epa.gov](mailto:benevento.douglas@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Statement from the Administrator

Nancy, any update on this?

---

**From:** Grantham, Nancy <[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov](mailto:Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 10:41 AM  
**To:** Molina, Michael <[molina.michael@epa.gov](mailto:molina.michael@epa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Gunasekara, Mandy <[gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov](mailto:gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov)>; Hewitt, James <[hewitt.james@epa.gov](mailto:hewitt.james@epa.gov)>; Benevento, Douglas <[benevento.douglas@epa.gov](mailto:benevento.douglas@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Statement from the Administrator

Got it .. will send around a preview shortly thanks ng

**Nancy Grantham**  
**Principal Deputy Associate Administrator**  
**Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Office of Public Affairs**  
**202-564-6879 (desk)**  
**202-253-7056 (cell)**  
[grantham.nancy@epa.gov](mailto:grantham.nancy@epa.gov)

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**From:** Molina, Michael <[molina.michael@epa.gov](mailto:molina.michael@epa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 10:40 AM  
**To:** Grantham, Nancy <[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov](mailto:Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Gunasekara, Mandy <[gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov](mailto:gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov)>; Hewitt, James <[hewitt.james@epa.gov](mailto:hewitt.james@epa.gov)>; Benevento, Douglas <[benevento.douglas@epa.gov](mailto:benevento.douglas@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: Statement from the Administrator

This is the final version.

As an American and as a 14 year veteran Senate staffer, I was completely disgusted by yesterday's events. There is no place for violence in settling political disputes. During my entire career I have upheld the rule of law and the Constitution of the United States. I take my oath of office, my obligation to the Agency and to the American People very seriously.

In my first speech to you, the Agency employees, i vowed to leave the Agency stronger than I found it. To date, we have provided the Biden transition team with hundreds of documents and over fifty briefings. My intention is to continue to honor the mission of the Agency, to protect public health and the environment, until January 20th in order to provide as smooth a transition for the Agency as possible.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 7, 2021, at 9:36 AM, Grantham, Nancy  
<[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov](mailto:Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov)> wrote:

Will do now – thanks ng

**Nancy Grantham**  
**Principal Deputy Associate Administrator**  
**Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Office of Public Affairs**  
**202-564-6879 (desk)**  
**202-253-7056 (cell)**  
**[grantham.nancy@epa.gov](mailto:grantham.nancy@epa.gov)**

---

**From:** Gunasekara, Mandy <[gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov](mailto:gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 10:35 AM  
**To:** Grantham, Nancy <[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov](mailto:Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov)>  
**Cc:** Hewitt, James <[hewitt.james@epa.gov](mailto:hewitt.james@epa.gov)>; Benevento, Douglas <[benevento.douglas@epa.gov](mailto:benevento.douglas@epa.gov)>; Molina, Michael <[molina.michael@epa.gov](mailto:molina.michael@epa.gov)>  
**Subject:** Statement from the Administrator

Hi Nancy,  
Below is a statement approved by the administrator that he would like to send out ot all staff under his banner. Can you tee that up and send around for one more review before you hit send?

Thank you,  
Mandy

## **Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)**

**Mandy M. Gunasekara**

Chief of Staff, US EPA

C: 202-923-5320

“We serve at the pleasure of the President.”

Message

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**From:** Forsgren, Lee [Forsgren.Lee@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 7:34:09 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]; Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Meadowcroft, Micah [Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Letter of Resignation  
**Attachments:** D Lee Forsgren EPA Resignation letter 1-4-21.pdf

Administrator Wheeler,

Attached is my letter of resignation from my position as Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Office of Water. I want to make clear that while I am broken saddened and outraged at the events of yesterday this resignation has nothing to do with those events. I wanted you to know that it has been an honor and privilege to serve you and I would hope that we can stay in touch as we move forward in our next endeavors.

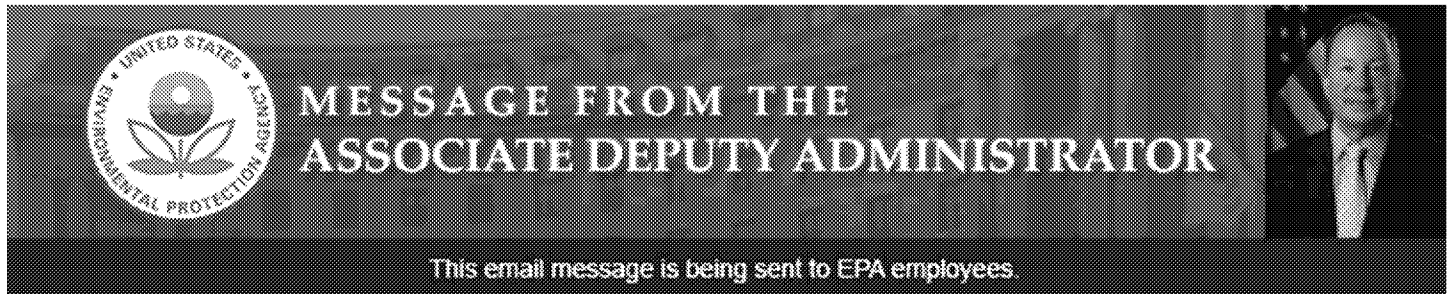
Respectfully,  
Lee

**D. Lee Forsgren**  
Deputy Assistant Administrator  
Office of Water  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania, Avenue NW  
Room 3219B WJC East Building  
Washington, DC 20460  
202-564-5700



Message

**From:** Message from the Associate Deputy Administrator [messagefromtheassociatedeputyadministrator@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 7:44:31 PM  
**To:** Message from the Associate Deputy Administrator [messagefromtheassociatedeputyadministrator@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** COVID-19 Facility Status Update



Dear Colleagues,

Happy new year. I hope you and your loved ones were able to stay safe during the holidays as the nation continued to grapple with COVID-19. Living and working through a pandemic this past year has been taxing on our work teams, on our communities, and on each other individually. I am proud of the great work you all do, day in and day out, to support the critical mission of protecting human health and the environment in these challenging times.

Today, ORD, OMS, and OCIR performed a detailed and thorough review of the COVID-19 data from the EPA Dashboard. They also evaluated city, state, and county requirements and other local conditions around EPA's more than 100 facilities. We have not seen COVID-19 conditions that support a change in our facility reopening status during today's review. Therefore, the Administrator and I decided that all facilities should remain in their current phase until the next review on Thursday, February 18, 2021.

The EPA [Facility Status Dashboard](#) will continue to be updated every Thursday, and we encourage all employees to stay informed about the status of your local commuting area and keep checking for updates on the [COVID-19 intranet site](#).

Throughout this entire pandemic, our primary focus has been to protect the well-being and safety of our employees - because you are the mission of the EPA. So regardless of the current Phase for your facility, we encourage you to continue teleworking and leveraging workplace flexibilities as needed. It is critical that everyone remembers to stay safe and continue to take the necessary precautionary measures to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

I thank you for your commitment to the EPA and the American public during these trying times. Please continue to take care of yourself and each other.

Sincerely,

Douglas Benevento  
Associate Deputy Administrator



Message

---

**From:** Hyman, Alana [Hyman.Alana@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 10:32:27 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Scott, Corey [scott.corey@epa.gov]; Molina, Michael [molina.michael@epa.gov]; Vella, Sophia [Vella.Sophia@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Re: Tuesday

Absolutely. I will make sure to block the time.

Regards,

Alana

> On Jan 7, 2021, at 5:31 PM, adm15.arwheeler.email <adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov> wrote:  
>  
> I'm going to need two 30 minute blocks on Tuesday with Corey for thank you notes. Thanks.  
>  
> Sent from my iPhone

Message

---

**From:** Vella, Sophia [Vella.Sophia@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/7/2021 11:13:50 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Re: Can you do me a favor

Hi Sir,

Absolutely!

Sincerely,

Sophia Vella

> On Jan 6, 2021, at 6:28 AM, adm15.arwheeler.email <adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov> wrote:

>

> I meant to start checking on places that will deliver for the lunch next Thursday. Can you see if Rocklands BBQ will deliver and what their prices would be, I think Hill Country would be too expensive, not sure if there are other places. Thanks.

>

> Sent from my iPhone

Message

---

**From:** Hewitt, James [hewitt.james@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/6/2021 12:53:07 AM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Fwd: Please pass on to Administrator Wheeler -- from Kent Lassman at the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

See below from Kent.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Kent Lassman <Kent.Lassman@cei.org>  
**Date:** January 5, 2021 at 7:10:40 PM EST  
**To:** "Hewitt, James" <hewitt.james@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Please pass on to Administrator Wheeler -- from Kent Lassman at the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

Administrator Wheeler –

Congratulations on the development and promulgation of a rule that will certainly improve accountability at the agency.

Though I've said it publicly many times, it is worth a moment to be perfectly clear with you in private correspondence: I believe your leadership at the EPA in the past several years has done as much to improve how a regulatory agency works and the relationship between Americans and the regulatory state as any other comparable point of reference. You were called to serve and did so ably. The agency and fidelity to the law are better for it.

Thank you.

Clearly, there have been and will continue to be areas where we come to differing conclusions. Some are legal questions and others are simply prudential; all have been handled professionally and with integrity.

I made a note to myself this morning to make sure to drop a line of gratitude. I appreciate your willingness to work with us on the forum this morning and what your team does week-in and week-out. Looking back at this note before I hit send, I see that it covers a bit more ground. Nonetheless, thanks for the good work on the science transparency rule.

Very best to you and your team,

Kent  
@KentatCEI  
The Competitive Enterprise Institute  
*...expanding the boundaries of freedom*

Message

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**From:** Soltani, Beth [Soltani.Beth@epa.gov]  
on behalf of Lopez, Peter [lopez.peter@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 1/6/2021 5:23:08 PM  
**To:** adm15.arwheeler.email [adm15.arwheeler.email@epa.gov]  
**CC:** Gunasekara, Mandy [gunasekara.Mandy@epa.gov]; Meadowcroft, Micah [Meadowcroft.Micah@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Letter on behalf of Peter D. Lopez  
**Attachments:** LTR to Administrator Wheeler 1-6-21.pdf

**Beth Soltani**

Executive Assistant to the Regional Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 2  
290 Broadway  
New York, NY 10007  
Office: 212.637.5038  
Mobile: 646.531.2763